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SOCIALISM IN FRANCE.¹

IN spite of the overwhelming defeat of two of their leaders, MM. Jules Guesde and Jean Jaurès, the votes gained by the socialist candidates—even allowing for the large conservative vote which came to them through a political deal—show that their doctrines have many adherents in France. If one remembers, furthermore, that since the municipal elections such cities as Lille, Roubaix, Marseilles, Roanne, Cette, Montluçon, have had socialistic councils,² it must be admitted that the party, though far from having power to enforce its wishes, is one of which it is well to take account, and one whose teachings and whose tendencies are worth studying.

While the term “socialism” was used, for the first time in France, in 1833,³ and its teachings had forerunners much earlier, it is only about twenty years since socialism assumed any great importance in France. Under the Empire, as in the period ending with the overthrow of the government of the 16th of May, the struggle at first for liberty, then for the maintenance of the republican régime, scarcely left time for the development of social theories. But in 1877 MM. Jules Guesde and Lafargue began to disseminate in France the ideas of Karl Marx: the class

¹ Translated from the French manuscript, by Henry Rand Hatfield.

In addition to the citations given in the course of this article, the following works have been laid under contribution: ARCÈS-SACRÉ, *Lois Socialistes*; MAURICE BLOCK, *Petit dictionnaire politique et social*; DE LAVELEYE, *Le socialisme contemporain*; YVES GUYOT, *La tyrannie socialiste*; JULES HURET, *Enquête sur la question social en Europe*; CLAUDIO JANNET, *Le socialisme d'Etat et la réforme social*; PAUL LEROY-BEAULIEU, *La question ouvrière au XIXe siècle*; ANDRÉ LIESSE, *La question social*; FERNAND NANDIER, *Le socialisme et la révolution*; VILFREDO PARETO, *Cour d'économie politique*. Periodicals: *Journal des économistes*, *Revue d'économie politique*, *Revue politique et parlementaire*, *Monde économique*, *Bulletin de l'office du travail*.

² Except at Paris the municipal councillors elect from their own number the mayor and assistants. These represent, therefore, the opinions of the majority of the council.

³ By Pierre Leroux, though the priority of its use is claimed by L. Reybaud.

struggle, the fatal evolution towards collectivism ; making use in this campaign of trade syndicates (*syndicats professionnels*),¹ organizing congresses,² instigating strikes,³ and gradually succeeding in gaining political power. But at length as the party became organized, and its adherents more numerous, divergent tendencies appeared, culminating in a violent rupture.

At first the socialists acknowledged only the extreme revolutionary party ; but, by an easily understood evolution, while some still emphasized such doctrines, going to the verge of anarchy, others recognized that the conquest of political power was the only possible means whereby the demands of the party might prevail. Between these contradictory tendencies a division occurred. Appearing in several congresses, it reached a climax at the Congress of London, and resulted in bitter controversies between the Guesdists, who stood for the

¹ The law of March 21, 1884, recognized and regulated the existence of trade syndicates, which had been merely tolerated under the provisions of the law of June 14-17, 1791. Distinction is made between workingmen's syndicates (*syndicats ouvriers*), masters' syndicates (*syndicats de patrons*), and mixed syndicates (*syndicats mixtes*) containing both masters and workmen. The above mentioned law permits these trade syndicates or unions the right of free association, without special authorization by the government, even when composed of more than twenty persons, provided these are engaged in the same trade or in similar employments. These syndicates are exclusively for the purpose of studying and protecting economic interests, manufacturing, commercial and agricultural. Federations may be formed between syndicates, but these cannot hold real estate, nor appear in court. The syndicates, however, have this right ; they may hold the real estate required for their meeting places, their libraries and their trade schools. In accordance with the provisions of the law they may, without further organization, form among their membership special funds for mutual aid and for pensions, and can freely establish and conduct offices for furnishing information regarding the supply and demand of labor.

² Since 1876 there have been each year one or more congresses, that of Montluçon being called in September of that year. The questions discussed are : the position of the labor party, recent legislative elections and their results, the candidates elected by the party to the chamber and in the rural districts, the central and federal organization of the party, the propaganda and means for making it more effective. But the chief aim is to secure, if possible, the union of the various factions of the socialist party.

³ Anzin (1878 and 1884), Roubaix (1880), Bessèger (1882), Decazeville (1886), Paris (888), Amiens (1888 and 1893), Carmaux (1892). All these strikes gave rise to acts of intimidation, and some were the occasion of serious disturbances, which unhappily were not suppressed with sufficient energy and promptness.

conquest of political power, the Broussists, who aimed especially at the municipalization of public services, and the Allemanists,¹ with whom the acquisition of political power is only a bait and who compel the deputies or councillors elect to pledge themselves to obey instructions and to deposit with the committee their resignations in blank, an arrangement which places them entirely at the committee's disposal. Serious disagreements were also caused by the Boulangist episode, since among the socialists, as elsewhere, personal preferences and struggle for office have often caused party interests to be neglected and relegated to a second place.

However, despite the very real dissensions among them, the socialist deputies have shown great cohesion in the Chamber, keeping in perfect accord and, by that very fact, coming to possess a substantial influence. Their alliance with the radical party even had the result that under the Bourgeois ministry they persuaded themselves that they had gained control and that, some fine morning, France would awake collectivist, as she awoke republican in 1870. Naturally the bills presented by the socialist deputies, and supported, with undeniable talent, by their orators, merely reproduced the party programs: an eight-hour day, international legislation on the subject of labor, workmen's pensions, freedom of association, etc. At times, also, they overshot the mark, as in the bill for free bread, proposed by M. Clovis Hugues, the effect of which would have been an additional tax, for Paris alone, of 154 millions.

The acts of the city councils are more difficult to understand, since there is often a lack of complete data. However, it seems that, if not all, at least the majority, have thought that compensation ought to be granted to municipal councillors; they have often added to the number of officials, they have increased the cost of public works by substituting state construction for the contract system, and have in certain cases shown undisguised favoritism. Then, it must be admitted that they have rarely

¹ These names are derived from those of the party leaders: Guesde, Brousse and Allemane.

neglected the opportunity of entering into a conflict with the departmental or central government, seeking by all possible means to increase their own powers, or rather refusing to acknowledge any superior authority competent to control their actions.

This tendency to disregard all legal restrictions is, however, not peculiar to the socialist municipal assemblies, as is shown by the history of the Labor Exchange (*Bourse de travail*). Established in quarters furnished by the city of Paris and provided with a budget of 154,000 francs, it soon became the home of the revolutionary propaganda. Most of the syndicates which met there had no legal standing, not having conformed to the provisions of the law of 1884.¹ When legal demand was made of them, these syndicates refused to conform to the law, and the circumstances were such that, in 1893, after several evasions, M. Dupuy, then minister, closed the Bourse. It has since been reopened, the syndicates having consented to do what was necessary.

From another point of view, the action of the syndicates has furnished ground for just criticism. Their directors have often given evidence of a spirit of extreme protectionism and exclusivism, compelling workmen, even by boycotting, to become members, demanding of employers the discharge of non-union laborers,² and exerting every effort to bring it about that the employment of labor could be effected only through their agency. Most of these demands are reproduced in the bill of Bovier Lapierre, which would impose an imprisonment, of from ten days to one month, and a fine, of from 100 to 2000 francs, on employers found guilty of interfering with the operations of

¹ Filing of the rules and the names of the officers at the mairie, or, in the case of Paris, at the prefecture of the Seine; renewal to be made with each change of management or modification of the rules; copies of these to be sent to the procureur of the republic by the maire or by the prefect of the Seine; provision that all the officers or directors of trade syndicates must be Frenchmen and in possession of civil rights.

² On various occasions the courts have awarded damages to workmen who were the victims of such procedure.

a trade syndicate. This bill was passed by the chamber, but was, fortunately, defeated in the senate.

The efforts of the socialist party have not been confined to propagandism and electioneering. Two attempts at socialistic organization have been tried, but under conditions which prevented their success. At the time of the Richarme strike, a glass factory, called the *Verrerie Ouvrière*, was started as a co-operative society. In spite of sacrifices of all kinds consented to by the workmen, bankruptcy was declared in 1892, with liabilities of 510,000 francs and assets of 355,000. At the time of the bankruptcy another glass factory was established, for the purpose of giving employment to the workmen discharged by M. Rességnier, and, if possible, of ruining him by excessive competition. Capital was secured from a gift of 100,000 francs, from other private gifts, from a subscription by the municipal council of Albi, and from a lottery, with tickets at 20 centimes established by the stock committee. We are not further concerned, at present, with this co-operative society; the profits, after the deductions provided for in the regulation, are devoted entirely to the cause of the proletariat. The management of the factory was the occasion of a fierce conflict between the Guesdists and the Allemanists, in which the latter were victorious, as the statutes provide that: "In the management of the glass works, the largest liberty is allowed to the workmen, the producers being entitled to be masters and to direct the work as they see fit." One may well doubt if this enterprise, so pretentiously announced, will not soon share the fate of the *Verrerie Ouvrière*. It is true that in case of success the sentiment of solidarity seems to vanish, the older members no longer being willing to share profits with new ones. This was the cause of the suit between the miners of Gien and the miners' syndicate.

More recently, but with no less ardor than those of whom we have spoken, the Catholics have, in their turn, busied themselves with social questions, some bringing to the discussion a boldness which the most uncompromising socialists would not disavow. Naturally, the Christian socialists, of whom M. de Mun

is the most striking figure, not looking at the questions from the same point of view, do not reach the same solutions as MM. Guesde and Lafargue. But they, too, consider that in the present condition of industry and of labor some radical reforms are necessary. The means employed differ but little: congresses, Catholic workingmen's clubs and the propaganda by public addresses and through the press are alike used. Among the Catholics too, dissensions have arisen leading to controversies quite as bitter in spirit, though more courteous in form.

In a country of universal suffrage, where the majority rules, the success gained by the socialists and the reception given to their theories in labor centers could not pass unnoticed. The study, or at least the consideration, of what is called the social question is imposed on all who canvass for elective offices, and they are compelled to promise to support the demands of their constituents. Deputies and Senators, obedient to these convictions—new, but nevertheless legitimate, if sincere—have formally or informally gone over to radicalism. By a process of evolution they have ended by swelling the ranks of the socialists, to whom they have brought no mean support. To cite a marked instance, the defeat of M. Goblet at the recent election signifies, perhaps, that this change of face has not obtained universal approval.

But aside from that, many other deputies and senators, whether to maintain their popularity or for some other reason, have said that social reforms were necessary. Finding socialists among churchmen as well as among free-thinkers, and holding that governments, both abroad and in France, should in all circumstances declare that social questions deserve all their care, they have given the support of their votes to purely socialistic proposals. Thus they assist in giving to the party an ever increasing influence, the act of supporting its measures being tantamount to an admission that the criticisms are just and that the innovations demanded are necessary.

To read certain lucubrations, to hear some of the addresses in congresses or public meetings, one would be tempted to believe

that anarchy was only advanced socialism, and, consequently, that socialism should bear the responsibility of the well-known crimes of anarchy. Nor would that be a real injustice. Certainly the theories promulgated by collectivists approach in more than one point those of the anarchists. Like them, they sanction violent means, the employment of force,—“the mid-wife of society,” to use the expression of Karl Marx—deeming that only revolution will permit the realization of their ideal.¹ Like them they reject the idea of “fatherland,” frontiers being regarded as mere geographical obstructions,² a theory which the socialist repudiates, holding aloof from those whom they call “*sans-patrie*.” But in the social organization for which they hope, the collectivists admit a social obligation, a subordination of the various members of society, differing in this from the anarchists who resent all restraint.

¹ Those also who call themselves simply socialists think that revolution is necessary for the triumph of their ideas, but without wishing to attach to this word the meaning which it ordinarily bears. “That which, essentially, constitutes a revolution is the breaking of existing law. This is the sole element required to constitute it; all the rest is immaterial. Unfortunately, one is too prone, generally speaking, to think that the word revolution necessarily implies the execution of persons or the destruction of property. These are catastrophes which socialists, as far as lies in their power, seek to avoid; for they know that excess in one direction provokes a movement in the opposite direction, and they do everything not to compromise their work by causing a reaction.”—GABRIELLE DEVILLE, *Principes socialistes*.

² “What are frontiers? An invention of savages, brutal, predatory, carnivorous, who, living in a perpetual state of brigandage, leagued themselves in hostile tribes within slaughter-pens which pompously took the name of fatherland. These little lairs of savage hordes were full of heroes whose glories consisted in killing, that is to say, in murdering, their neighbors so unfortunate as to be born across the frontiers. These furnish an exact image in miniature, of those horrible fatherlands which are in reality only the galleys of the masses and the fruitful property of the rich.”—HENRI BRISSAC, *Résumé populaire du socialisme*.

On the other hand, M. Gabrielle Deville expresses himself quite differently: “To protect, as far as possible, whatever independence remains to them as laborers, workmen are led by circumstances to become cosmopolitan, but whenever their independence as Frenchmen is imperilled they should be exclusively patriots, and that, too when there is no immediate danger, if the strengthening of the national defence is in question. . . . To sum up, cosmopolitans in relation to their fellow workmen, when the interests of labor are at stake in time of peace; patriots and Frenchmen before all, should France, our Fatherland, ever be in danger of war, thinking ever of duty, such, laborers and socialists ought to be.”—*Principes socialistes*.

Divided on all these points, the different schools of socialists unite in attacking capitalism, which they hold responsible for all the wrongs, for all the sufferings of labor. In the utterances of M. Benoit Malon, of M. Guesde, of M. Gabrielle Deville, in the programs drawn up in congresses, and in the party manifestos, capitalism is always charged with all the deadly sins.¹ The remedy lies, of course, in the suppression of capitalism, in the nationalization of the means of production; land, factories, ships, banks, credit, etc.; and expropriation which alone can lead to this, is looked upon as natural, as an evolution, fatal to present society,² but destined to lead to the emancipation of labor.³

¹ "On such an occasion, the capitalistic machine quickens its activity, devouring small capitals; small employers, small merchants, small landholders are each year, in Europe and America, dispossessed by millions. The monster seizes them by usury or by competition, in a grip of iron, strips them, ruins them, and hurls them despairing into the ranks of the proletariat, thus continually swollen and rendered ever more formidable, more discontented. It is evident that capitalistic production is harmful even to its own development. It is the murderer of the mass of producers, the despoiler of the middle and small *bourgeoisie*, and incapable of directing the productive forces which it has called into being."—BENOIT MALON, *Précis de socialisme*.

"The proprietary class not only divests itself of all social usefulness, but it becomes even harmful by its exclusive appropriation of personal profit. Harmful it is too for the whole system of social production, which the inordinate pursuit of profits exposes to disastrous disturbances, to periodic crises, which engulf trade and continue through bankruptcies and hard times, as long as the markets are closed. But it is especially harmful to the body of workmen, worn out during the busy season and utterly miserable in times of crises."—GABRIELLE DEVILLE, *Principes socialistes*. See also: *Le collectivisme au Palais Bourbon*, a speech in the chamber of deputies, by M. JULES GUESDE.

² "Communism no longer exists merely in the heads of thinkers and in the dreams of those yearning for peace and happiness. It appears in economic realities, it surrounds us with its industries and agriculture, it entwines us with its customs and institutions, it imperceptibly transforms the minds of men, and stirs up the wretched masses of the proletariat. Communism exists in the state, it is latent in the depths of the economic world, and it awaits only the fatal hour of revolution to appear on the social scene."—P. LAFARGUE, *La propriété*.

³ "While the means of production and labor itself are not united in the same hands, the former will preserve the characteristics of capital, that is, to exploit the laborer and to squeeze work out of him for which it will not pay. . . . When capital has been embodied in the form of instruments, the collective means of production and labor itself cannot be united in the same hands save by the transformation of capitalistic property into social property, of capitalistic production into social production. Assisted by the economic facts of the present society, this transformation, the sociali-

Nevertheless in a country like France, where land is so much divided, where so many own their own homes and the soil they cultivate, such socialization — expropriation disguised under an euphemism — could not but meet with a cool reception. So, by a wise exception, those whose fortune does not exceed a certain fixed sum, are to retain possession until the time when, convinced of the superiority of the collectivist régime, they shall voluntarily agree to its program.¹ Under the régime thus established competition disappears, commodities are delivered by the administrative officials in return for labor checks, money is done away with, and the value of commodities is estimated in hours of labor.² As the settlement of all accounts will be accomplished by a system of liquidation, analogous to that of the clearing house, but carried on in terms of labor and labor products, all commercial institutions, such as markets, bourses, etc., will be abolished.

Awaiting the time, doubtless far distant, when all these ideas can be realized, socialists present a series of demands designed to mitigate the present state of affairs, and slowly but surely to prepare the way for the desired socialization. The agricultural program, formulated at the Congress of Nantes,³ and the program of the working men's party, drawn up at the Congress of Marseilles in 1879 and successively ratified and amended at various congresses, recommend that the functions of the trade union, under collectivist influences, of the means of production, is possible, and it is apparently the only practicable means of emancipating laborers and society as a whole."—G. DEVILLE, *Principes socialistes*.

¹ "But no expropriation shall be ordered of small agricultural holders who cultivate their own plots of ground, nor of small artisans who use their own tools, nor of petty tradesmen who themselves buy and sell merchandise. And should they in addition own a limited amount of 'pseudo-property,' such as stocks, bonds, government annuities, etc., they shall be reimbursed at a fair valuation. Laborers will be exempt from the socialization as long as they wish, or rather as long as they believe it to be to their advantage." — HENRI BRISSAC, *Résumé populaire du socialisme*.

² If for example — as Marx has expressed it — a country needs 20,000 hectoliters of wheat and employs in its production 100,000 days labor — socially organized — each hectoliter would be worth $\frac{100,000}{20,000} = 5$ days of socially necessary labor time. — *Quintessence of socialism*.

³ For the text of this Agricultural Program, see Appendix p. 141.

syndicates and of the labor exchanges be extended and strengthened; that a demand be made for the relegation of all public services to the communes; that support be given to all measures leading to state assumption of all or part of what they term capitalistic monopolies, banks, mines railroads, etc.,¹ and that burdens of all kinds be laid on capital, progressive taxes, inheritance taxes, etc. At the same time they censure the tendency toward the "Providential state" a state which without establishing a collectivist society, shall regulate, by delegates chosen according to existing methods, the work of each citizen, which shall assign to him his place in the social structure, determine his sphere of activity and his daily task, control education, assume the maintenance and instruction of children, attend even to the kitchen,² and fix the price of goods sold in the great social bazaars, a happy organization, where each from birth to death is guided by the state, and where nothing is lacking save liberty. They demand that the state, such as it now is, shall fix a shorter working day, a minimum wage, workingmen's pensions, that is to say, that it shall begin the rôle of tutelary divinity which it is to play in the future.

It is not surprising that the spirit of revolutionary change, which has so long been predominant in the nations of the earth, should have passed beyond politics and made its influence felt in the cognate field of practical economy.

¹ "The essential thing is to restore to society what belongs to society, and to transform into public service every organization for production or transportation which might become a monopoly. After the great credit institutions, after the mines and quarries, the railroads and canals, it will be proper to take over mineral springs, still in private hands, oil wells, and, in general, all subterranean riches. Then should come the socialization of marine transportation, of insurance, of local systems of land clearing, drainage, irrigation, reclamation of swamps, forest planting; dyking of streams, and improvement of water courses. It is equally necessary to place under the control of the state, dock-yards, great factories, and, large iron works, as soon as they shall, by virtue of their magnitude, become monopolies. What is true for the state is also true for the commune, which also ought to transform into public enterprises all monopolies within its jurisdiction."—BENOIT MALON, *Précis de socialisme*.

² "If you wish a cabbage soup you will write your order and put in it a pneumatic tube running to your house. It will be conveyed to the great neighborhood kitchen, and very soon you will have your soup steaming hot. But generally you will prefer to take your meal in one of the social restaurants, either in a public or a private dining-room."—HENRI BRISSAC, *La société collectiviste*.

The elements of a conflict are unmistakable ; the growth of industry, and the surprising discoveries of science, the changed relations of master and workmen, the enormous fortunes of individuals, and the poverty of the masses, the increased self-reliance and the closer mutual combination of the working population, and, finally, a general moral deterioration.¹

These lines which begin the famous Encyclical of Leo XIII explain why the primate of Christianity thought it necessary to speak on social questions, to profess himself a socialist as M. Henri Brissac ironically puts it. A form of socialism, however, very different from that of which M. Brissac has given us an outline ; one which considers that private property is one of the natural rights of man, which vests in the church the only power competent to ameliorate the condition of the people, which posits as its first principle that man ought to bear his lot in patience, which enjoins the patronage system, that is to say enjoins on the employer the fulfillment of the duty to treat his workmen as a father treats his children, which permits, though within narrow limits, state intervention,² and which above all commands a return to ancient guilds organized in such a way that they should "furnish the best and most suitable means for attaining what is aimed at, that is to say, for helping each individual member to better his condition to the utmost, in body, mind, and property."³ These associations are to settle disputes between masters and workmen and to take the proper means to mitigate the effects of shut-downs, of sickness, of old age, to discuss the rate of wages and to fix in each industry the length of the working day.

Far from relegating to the state the care of bringing up and

¹ Citations from the *Encyclical* are here given in the words of the official English version. [Translators note.]

² "Rights must be religiously respected wherever they are found ; and it is the duty of the public authority to prevent and punish injury and to protect each one in the possession of his own. Still when there is question of protecting the rights of individuals, the poor and helpless have a claim to special consideration. The richer population have many ways of protecting themselves, and stand less in need of help from the state ; those who are badly off have no resources of their own to fall back upon, and must chiefly rely on the assistance of the state. And it is for this reason that wage-earners, who are undoubtedly among the weak and necessitous, should be specially cared for and protected by the commonwealth."— *Encyclical*.

³ *Encyclical*.

educating children, the Christian socialists wish still farther to strengthen family ties, to protect the home, and to modify the provisions of the civil code in such a way as to harmonize the three following interests: respect for parental authority, the unimpaired transmission of the patrimony in which the family traditions are embodied, and the welfare of the children. At the same time the restrictions and the charges imposed on the small proprietor ought to cease, and an adaptation of the homestead law should exempt the home from seizure. Christian socialists also regard capital as harmful, but instead of demanding expropriation, pure and simple, and the nationalization of the means of production, they propose a modification of the system of joint-stock companies, so that each shareholder, not each share of stock, shall have a single vote. Mutual credit societies should also be promoted; and state loans, since they are an important factor of the money power, must be decreased and paid off. This is to be accomplished through a change in the political system, so that representation shall be based on corporative organizations. Consequently the trade which each individual follows will be represented, and in such a manner as to safeguard all rights and interests.¹ The trade or corporative associations are to be the most important factors in the new organization.

They shall undertake the tasks which the state now performs at great expense and at the cost of stifling all initiative. They shall stem the rising tide of bureaucracy, which daily extends its conquests, and whose power, increasing under the pretext of strengthening the state, weakens society.

¹"In place of a mechanical, bureaucratic administration, which stifles all true liberty, to substitute a living organism, in which each organ enjoys relative autonomy, limited only by its purposes, freely exercising its functions with a view to the general welfare; instead of a moribund parliamentarism, which is but a confused, disordered expression of conflicting opinions, passions and appetites, to establish a system of representation based on the rights and interests of the various groups which, organized and coördinated, make up the nation; such is the end we seek to reach, and to which the country, after a century of suffering and agitation, unconsciously aspires."—"Socialisme chrétien" in *Nouveau dictionnaire d'économie politique*.

It is well to note that this article was inserted in the dictionary for the sake of scientific impartiality; but that certain political and economic theories, therein enunciated, called forth some express reservations on the part of the editors.

Such a régime will make of the nation a living body of which each member has its individual existence, not a piece of lifeless mechanism dependent for motion upon a central power whose claims seem the more excessive as its haphazard structure provokes the greater distrust.¹

The definition of state socialism : The introduction of social reforms into the organization of the state without fundamentally disturbing the legal and political institutions of the present order, sufficiently indicates the goal sought.² But according to the partisans of this form of socialism, the desired goal can be reached only by direct, positive interference of the state. This, while correcting actual abuses and protecting the feeble against the strong, comes at length to protect the individual against himself, to protect him even where protection seems useless. In drawing a distinction between pure socialism and state socialism, one may say the former tends to produce a society of slaves to the state, the latter merely a society of minors, of whom the state is guardian. Recognizing in its very principles the necessity of the state, whatever the form of government, state socialism recognizes, as well, the principle of private property and of the family, and rejects all thought of leveling down, of redistribution of goods, or of holding them in common according to the collectivist theory.

In France, where the idea of paternal government (*État Providence*) is so deep-rooted, state socialism claims many adherents. Propositions which are deduced from such a theory are supported by socialists of every school, by some as means towards an end, by others as being in harmony with their own theories.

¹ "Socialisme chrétien," *Nouveau dictionnaire d'économie politique*. The social theories of the Christian socialists are by no means held by all French Catholics. On the contrary many Catholics protest against the doctrines which demand constant intervention by the state. They expect the remedy for present evils to come from intelligent private initiative, and ask of the state merely that it shall not hinder this initiative, but grant to all the greatest freedom. Such is the programme of the Société Catholique d'Économie Politique et Sociale, which has had for its presidents Bishops Treppel and D'Hulst.

² M. Gabrielle Deville — accurately, it seems to me — defines such movement as "a more or less thorough infiltration of socialism into the state." — *Principes socialistes*.

Just as the state is asked, by means of a customs tariff, to give to merchants, manufacturers, and farmers, profits which their occupations do not succeed in gaining for them, so in the social order the state is asked to intervene in labor compacts, to make good the lack of foresight, to prevent every abuse—a tax being laid to furnish the necessary resources should occasion arise.¹ And many of those who vehemently reject the collectivist theories hold those reforms possible, even desirable, which allow the state to take over the larger number of enterprises, and as a part of the same idea, those which permit municipalities to undertake and direct whatever may, in any way, give rise to a monopoly.

Socialism, with or without any modifying term, is imbued with the doctrines of Karl Marx and Lassalle; the Christian socialists have a program closely resembling that of the German Catholic socialists, and state socialism is an application of the theories of the German economists who are called “socialists of the chair.” These theories have few adherents in France among professional economists; they are found, however, among members of the political organizations—among those who, to a greater or less degree, are dependent on popular suffrage.

To give to workmen a picture, painted in rather dark hues, of their position, placing beside it all the advantages of wealth; to tell them that the luxury which dazzles them can be obtained only by their spoliation, to promise that with the socialist régime they in their turn shall have every advantage; to tell those who possess nothing that they shall then have their share, easily exaggerated, of the social wealth; to persuade agricultural laborers, small cultivators toiling painfully on their plot of ground, that the collectivist régime will ameliorate their condi-

¹ One may cite in this connection the law relating to trade associations (1884); to the commission on the security of mine operatives (1890); the establishment of the *Conseil Supérieur du Travail* (1891); of the *Office du Travail* (1891); the law relating to the labor of children, girls, and women, in factories (1892); relating to the health and security of workmen in factories (1893); to the funds for aiding and pensioning miners (1894); to labor casualties (1898).

tion, placing at their disposal means of cultivation which only the rich can employ ; to exalt to the extreme the sentiment of equality, which is often only envy of those whom one knows or believes to be his superiors ; all this brings many partisans to socialism. But it gives rise, as well, to class antagonisms, to hatred, all the more formidable because hidden, and to acts of violence whenever any circumstance occasions an explosion. The continual recourse to the state, the carefully fostered belief that it alone can solve the social question, that it alone can apply the remedy to the present evils, tend to destroy all energy, to annihilate all initiative. The result is that votes are given to those who make the most attractive promises, which can only lead to bitter disappointment.

Nevertheless one cannot say that all that the socialists have done is harmful, that their writings, their addresses have done nothing but disseminate the seeds of evil. That would be a real injustice. Without doubt the picture drawn by them is wilfully distorted; their criticisms of society are often more vehement than just. But they have pointed out existing evils ; they have called the attention of all to unappreciated suffering ; they have caused the relations between capital and labor to be stated more precisely than ever before. If they have not been able to indicate the remedy they have at least pointed out the evil. They have also shown to all the importance of solidarity, the strength which comes from union, and having proved it in politics, they are at least trying to make proof of it in the economic sphere. With greater self-reliance, understanding their power when united, the working men will find in association the means for bettering their condition—the rest being done through private initiative.

On what may be done by private initiative will depend, we think, the future of socialism. The near approach of a collectivist régime, notwithstanding its promised advantages and the resultant social improvements, is not now to be feared, any more than one is to look for an application of the theories of the Christian socialists. No sentiment is stronger in France than that in favor of private property. The spirit of economy, one

may say of foresight, is too well developed for the communistic régime not to encounter a formidable opposition; nor, on the other hand, is Christian socialism more likely to prevail. The establishment of guilds with their strictly drawn rules, the restraints which would ensue, and the duty of religious observances—these too grievously offend the spirit of liberty in the majority of workingmen. But the same is not true of state socialism. One may fear that, through one concession after another, we may by experience learn, in part, what a collectivist society would be. We may be made to understand better what would be the cost of state exploitation, the experiment, of course, being at the expense of the taxpayers.

Against such tendencies a reaction may and should be produced by private initiative. This may appear in many forms; in mutual credit associations; in consumers' co-operation—as yet not common in France, though its marvelous results may be observed in neighboring countries; in productive co-operation, more difficult but not impossible to establish; in profit-sharing, which in many cases can ameliorate the present condition and assure the future of workingmen; in the establishment of local associations to insure against old age, shut-downs and sickness; in an increase in the number of workingmen's houses, with provisions for speedy purchase by the occupants; in the founding of crèches, orphanages, lying-in hospitals, and asylums; in a word, in the establishment of everything which can either morally or physically better the condition of workingmen. But to secure this the state must abandon its traditional rôle; it must leave to each the care of protecting his own interests, limiting itself to securing to all the same protection—equal rights with equal duties, equal obligations and equal advantages—repressing firmly, but without undue harshness, all fraud and violence. It must also leave to private industry all that the latter can do better or more quickly, confining itself to the natural function of control and supervision, more rigorous when the general welfare is concerned. It must grant local self-government to the communes and the municipalities, entrusting to the electors the

duty of selecting suitable officials and imposing on the latter sufficient responsibility to deter them from any costly whims. It must seek to lighten fiscal burdens, not by taxation, since the shifting of incidence is inevitable, but by diminishing public expenses. It must grant the greatest freedom to associations, while enforcing implicit obedience to the law, and repressing with severity any illegal act, wherever found. Such, in our opinion, is the rôle of the state. Such should be the program of those who seek as far as possible to solve the social problem, a program summed up in the first word of the republican motto — Liberty.

G. FRANÇOIS.

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